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ABSTRACT

A 3-year university-based inservice training model for personnel serving handicapped preschoolers (aged 0-5) in rural New Mexico has been comprised of seven major steps: establishment of traineeships, information dissemination/recruitment, selection of trainees, needs assessment, development of coursework, training, and evaluation. Twenty-eight trainees representing 23 of New Mexico's 32 counties have received 5 weeks of intensive didactic training and hands-on experience through the third year of the project and all have agreed to provide follow-up inservice training in their home or contiguous counties upon request. Stated criteria for six of eight outputs were obtained or surpassed during the first 22 months of the project (one output was not measured due to lack of a satisfactory observation instrument). Major problems encountered included a fixed budget coupled with rising costs, lack of follow-up activities by some former trainees, and delays brought about by faculty assignments which conflicted with the director's quarter-time project responsibilities. Project spin-offs included: recognition by various state, regional, and national groups; materials requested and supplied for field-based training purposes; and involvement of the director on a state planning task force for early childhood education of the handicapped. (BRR)

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Results of an Inservice Training Program for Rural Early Childhood Special Educators

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Paper presented at Texas Tech University Research in Action Conference, Lubbock, Texas, April 2, 1982.

Running Head: Inservice Training Program

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A University-Based Inservice Training Model for Personnel Serving Handicapped Preschoolers, Toddlers and Infants in Rural Areas

As Karnes (1975) has pointed out, teachers who have been trained to work with normal young children (early childhood certification) or with older handicapped children (special education certification) are often unprepared to assume the multiple responsibilities of the teacher of preschool handicapped children. Such a teacher "is often a diagnostician, curriculum developer, manager and team leader, parent worker, trainer of volunteers and paraprofessionals, and public relations expert" (p. 81). In addition, this individual is also a teacher of a unique population of children (Hirshoren & Umansky, 1977).

Prior to the 1979-1980 academic year, few (if any) formal, on-going mechanisms existed for the delivery of inservice training for personnel serving New Mexico's preschool aged (0-5) handicapped population. Therefore, the project described in this paper was proposed and subsequently funded by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (BEH) effective June 1, 1979. The project is presently in the third year of a three-year cycle.

The following seven thrusts were proposed in response to the state's rural-remoteness (i.e., New Mexico ranks fifth geographically and thirty-seventh in population).

1. "School specific" on-site training by project staff.
2. University-based summer traineeships for one individual selected from each of New Mexico's 32 counties (see Appendix A).

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3. Field-based follow-up to summer training on special study basis.

4. Regional workshops. (third year only)

5. Field-based service activities within home counties by former summer trainees.

6. Linkage with the Educational Resources Information Center's Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ERIC/CRESS).

7. Establishment of a training materials collection at NMSU.

Subsequent budget negotiations with the funding agency resulted in (a) elimination of the on-site field-based training, and (b) reduction from 32 to 28 counties served in the university-based summer training component.

Procedure

Figure 1 graphically describes the seven major steps involved in the university-based inservice training model. These steps are also described in narrative form in the following seven subsections.

Insert Figure 1 about here

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1. Establishment of traineeships. Trainee in-state tuition and stipend dollar amounts were established with reference to Sections 121f.42 and 121f.50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (1978). The traineeships consist of a $75.00-a-week stipend for living expenses plus paid in-state tuition for six graduate credit hours.

2. Information dissemination/recruitment. The bulk of the summer trainee recruitment efforts have been carried out via project-

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developed brochures and posters. During the 1979-80 and 1980-81 academic years, 1,000 brochures and 200 posters were distributed (i.e., posted, hand-delivered, and/or mailed) to potential trainees through such agencies as the 89 local school districts, state-operated residential schools, local offices of the Division of Family Services, and Head Start programs. Additional information dissemination and/or recruitment efforts have included personal contact at professional conferences and state-wide news releases (see Appendix B).

3. Selection of trainees. A project advisory board consisting of a parent of a handicapped child, the director of the local community-based infant and preschool programs for the handicapped (Open Door[1]), the director of the NMSU Office of Indian Affairs, a professor of speech pathology, and a professor of educational administration have assisted the project staff in the trainee selection process. Trainees have been selected on the basis of the following four criteria:

(1) Current employment in a preschool program serving handicapped children.

(2) Acceptance by the NMSU Graduate School.

(3) Signed agreement to provide service in the home county or region (e.g., community screening).

(4) Stated need for training.

Notes:

[1]Open Door, Inc., is a local community-based program which operates replication sites for the University of Wyoming's Infant Stimulation Program (WISP) and the University of Illinois' Precise Early Education for Children with Handicaps (PEECH) program. These programs are housed within the NMSU College of Education and provide practicum experiences for summer trainees.

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4. Needs assessment. Immediately upon selection, trainees are sent a needs assessment instrument. This form provided the project staff with perceived training needs within the project's seven major curricular areas. For example, the spring 1980 needs assessment led to the inclusion of a session on grantsmanship and a greater emphasis upon parent involvement than originally planned.

5. Development of coursework. The summer coursework is developed around Stile's Student Competency Checklist (1978). A 1982 revision of this document (see excerpt from original document in Appendix C) is now being completed and will be submitted for inclusion in the ERIC system. The three-hour lecture class (SPED/ECED 550) and three-hour practicum (SPED 501) provide knowledge and skills within the following seven broad areas of competency:

(1) The development and use of an individualized educational program (IEP).

(2) Curriculum planning.

(3) The developmental tasks approach.

(4) Classroom/instructional management.

(5) Behavior management.

(6) Instructional materials.

(7) Miscellaneous background information/skills (e.g., grantsmanship, identification and reporting of child abuse, bilingual/bicultural considerations, etc.)

6. Training. Campus-based inservice training is delivered during a five-week summer session. It is estimated that (including outside assignments), the number of training hours equals 200. The total hours

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may be broken down as follows:

(1) In-class lectures/workshops (two hours daily for five weeks = 50 hours) (see Appendix D for excerpt from course syllabus).

(2) "Hands-on" experience in PEECH/WISP programs (two hours daily for five weeks = 50 hours).

(3) Outside assignments (e.g., abstracts over very recent professional literature, etc.) (four hours daily for five weeks = 100 hours).

7. Evaluation. The Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) (Yavorsky, 1976) is employed to carry out evaluation of the total project. The "Results" section below will present evaluation data from the first year. As described graphically in Figure 1, these findings are used for revision purposes in subsequent years.

Results : Trainee Wave No. 1 (Ay: 1979-80; Ay 1980-81)

Table 1 describes major evaluation questions according to the DEM convention. In DEM, data gathering for revision purposes is simply a matter of determining whether a discrepancy exists between what is (achievement) and what should be (outputs). The two Results sections are organized into the following 8 subsections which relate to the outputs listed in the last column of Table 1 for the two waves of trainees.

Insert Table 1 about here

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1. DEM output 1 (results). Subsequent to budget negotiations with the funding agency, the number of summer traineeships was reduced from 16 to 14. Recruitment and screening efforts led ultimately to the selection of 14 trainees by the Project Advisory Board.

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The desired output was achieved since (a) 100% of the trainees were selected on the basis of previously stated criteria, and (b) the trainees represented 14 separate counties.

2. DEM Output 2 (results). Summer trainees evaluated the training on a weekly basis using a five-point Likert Scale. Trainees were asked to rate each weekly unit (i.e., five days) of training in the following five ways:

(1) overall degree of interest (1-5)
(2) overall value (1-5)
(3) overall information of the audiovisual materials (1-5)
(4) informational value of handouts (1-5)
(5) degree to which the training provided a better basis for working with handicapped preschoolers (1-5)

Based upon the trainees' ratings over the above five areas of concern, the program successfully achieved the desired output. Trainee ratings surpassed the 80% criterion for four of the five weeks (80% of the sessions). These data are presented graphically in Figure 2.

Insert Figure 2 about here

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3. DEM output 3 (results). This output was concerned with the levels at which the 14 trainees scored on an objective-referenced posttest over the seven broad areas of competency described at the beginning of this paper. Figure 3 reveals that 100% of the trainees scored 80% or better on the posttest, thus achieving the desired output. Furthermore, 79% of the trainees scored 90% or better and trainee number six achieved the 100% level.

Since the same objective-referenced test was administered to all

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14 trainees on a pretest basis, it was also possible to evaluate output 3 relative to gain scores. Figure 3 graphically indicates that 100% of the scores improved on the second administration.

Another check on the pretest-posttest gain would be to employ a one-group pretest-posttest (Borg & Gall, 1974) and to compare the pretest and posttest means for statistical significance, using a t-test for correlated means. The obtained t value of 15.66 for 13 degrees of freedom (13 d.f.) was statistically significant beyond the .001 level of probability ($p < .001$). As Borg and Gall (1974) have pointed out, the one-group pretest-posttest design is appropriate when (as in the present project's five-week inservice training) the interval between the pretest and posttest is relatively short; thus minimizing threats to internal validity such as history and maturation.

Insert Figure 3 about here

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4. DEM Output 4 (results). The project staff and practicum personnel were unable to agree upon a valid and reliable observation instrument prior to the beginning of the summer 1980 inservice training and, therefore, this output was not measured. However an observation instrument was developed in time for the summer 1981 training session and data regarding this output are reported below under results for the second wave of trainees.

5. DEM Output 5 (results). Twelve of 14 (86%) students contracted (i.e., presented approved proposals) to do a follow-up special study in their home programs within the seven broad areas of training.

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To date, however, only six (43%) of these studies have been completed. Thus, although the stated criterion has already been surpassed, activities in this area are still underway and/or have not yet been initiated.

6. DEM output 6 (results). Each SPED 501 practicum participant was assigned at least one objective in each of two areas of the curriculum (e.g., language and fine motor) for their five weeks of individualized instruction with the PEECH and WISP students. Figure 4 indicated that the 80% criterion level was again surpassed (i.e., 86% of the students achieved objectives from the PEECH and WISP practicum IEP's in at least two areas of the curriculum).

Insert Figure 4 here

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7. DEM output 7 (results). Consumer output via a telephone survey and subsequent written correspondence with summer 1980 trainees indicated that 12 of 14 (86%) had provided inservice training and/or other types of service (e.g., community workshops, screenings) in their home or contiguous counties.

8. DEM output 8 (results). As with the previous output, no graphic display was developed for output 8. Data collected via a telephone survey indicated that 12 of 14 (86%) trainees applied at least some of the NMSU inservice competencies in their own programs.

In summary, the stated criteria for six of the eight outputs were obtained or surpassed during the first 22 months of the project. Output 4 was not measured due to lack of a satisfactory observation instrument.

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Results: Trainee Wave No. 2 (Ay: 1980-81; Ay: 1981-82)

Again, the DEM convention was used to gather data addressing the major evaluation questions in the last column of Table 1. However, results reported in this section should be regarded as tentative since evaluation data have not yet been analyzed by the project's outside evaluator relative to recruitment, training, and follow-up for the second wave of trainees.

1. DEM output 1 (results). As described above, budget nogotiations resulted in a reduction in the number of summer traineeships from 16 to 14 (or 28 of 32 counties covered). In the first year (Ay: 1979-80), 14 trainees representing 14 counties were selected by the Project Advisory Board relative to project eligibility criteria. However, only nine of the 14 members of the second wave of trainees represented new counties. Thus, output 1 was only partially met for the second wave of trainees since, although each trainee met the previously stated eligibility criteria, 14 additional counties were not represented.

2. DEM output 2 (results). Data relative to output 2 have not yet been analyzed by the outside evaluator. However, a cursory glance at the data for week one seems to indicate positive feedback for all five weekly units.

3. DEM output 3 (results). This output was concerned with the levels at which the 14 trainees scored on the objective-referenced posttest over the seven broad areas of training. One hundred percent of the second wave of trainees scored 80% or better on the posttest thus surpassing the desired output. Furthermore, 86% of the trainees scored 90% or better and trainee number six achieved 100% on the posttest.

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4. DEM output 4 (results). This output was not measured for the first wave of trainees. However (see Appendix E), an observation instrument was developed prior to Summer, 1981 and at the conclusion of the training period, 100% of the trainees (14 of 14) had reached criterion relative to the direct instructional model and the 11 designated areas of classroom management.

5. DEM output 5 (results). Only six of 14 (43%) second wave trainees contracted to do follow-up special study work in at least one of the seven broad competency areas.

6. DEM output 6 (results). Only six of 14 (43%) second wave trainees reached criterion relative to this output (i.e., achievement of at least one objective in two areas of the practicum IEP). However, over 60% or 9 of 14 trainees reached at least one objective in one area of the practicum IEP. This outcome could be related to WISP and PEECH student attendance which will be addressed in subsequent reports.

7. DEM output 7 (results). Data relative to this output will be gathered in April, 1982.

8. DEM output 8 (results). Data relative to this output will be gathered in April, 1982.

In summary, tentative findings are that the stated criteria for two of six outputs were obtained or surpassed relative to the recruitment, training, and follow-up with the second wave of trainees. Data relative to outputs seven and eight were not gathered prior to the development of the present paper.

Discussion

This document has described the major steps involved in the delivery

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of inservice training to personnel involved in the education of handicapped infants, toddlers and preschoolers in predominantly rural New Mexico. Results to date were also presented according to DEM convention. Twenty-eight trainees representing 23 of New Mexico's 32 counties have received five weeks of intensive didactic training and hands-on experience through the third year of the project and all have agreed to provide follow-up inservice training in their home or contiguous counties upon request.

Major problems encountered to date include a fixed budget (Office of Education policy) coupled with rising costs (e.g., wages; WATS line), lack of follow-up activities by some former trainees, and delays (e.g., in development of project materials) brought about by faculty assignments which conflict with the Director's quarter-time project responsibilities.

Project "spin-offs" to date include the following:

1. Working relationship with Albuquerque EC-H personnel preparation project serving Native American personnel.
2. Formal recognition of NMSU project as to the training program in New Mexico by State Developmental Disabilities Council.
3. Working relationship with UNM's Project DEEP (see program in Appendix F which was co-sponsored with Project DEEP).
4. Positive recognition for project-generated materials library by visiting NCATE team (Fall, 1981).
5. Invitation to present project activities at International, regional, state and local conferences (e.g., New York, April, 1981; Lubbock, TX, April, 1982).

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6. Materials requested and supplied for field-based training purposes (e.g., child-abuse conference in Raton, NM, 1981; community screening effort in Deming, NM, 1981).
7. Invitation to project director to serve on state planning task force for early childhood education of the handicapped.

Further activities include preparation of a final project report which will be submitted to the ERIC system and, therefore, made available for replication pruposes, new additions to the project materials collection and continued cooperation with the State Developmental Disabilities Council relative to future planning for EC-H programs. Should funding be secured from the Office of Education, three more years of inservice training will begin June 1, 1982.

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References

Code of Federal Regulations. October 1, 1978, 45, Subpart C, Sections 121f.42-121f.50.

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Karnes, M. B. Education of preschool-aged handicapped children. In W. P. McLure, R. A. Burnhan, & R. A. Henderson (Eds.), Special education: Needs, costs, methods of financing. Urbana, Illinois University of Illinois, 1975.

Stile, S. W. Student competency checklist: Handicapped preschool education program (first draft). Laramie, Wyoming: University of Wyoming, 1978.

Yavorsky, D. K. Discrepancy evaluation: A practitioner's guide. Morgantown, Virginia: University of Virginia Evaluation Center, 1976.

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Table 1

Program Design, AY: 1980-1981; AY: 1981-82

Inputs	Process	Outputs
1. Project Advisory Board 2. Project review of recent legislative mandates/state rules and regulations/applied research data for purposes of revising Student Competency Checklist, etc. 3. Project trainees' feedback via Student Competency Checklist.	1. Summer Institute: competency-based training for teachers of preschool handicapped children (five-week classroom instruction). 2. Summer Laboratory: four-week "hands-on" training to NMSU's preschool handicapped summer program. 3. Field-based special problems follow-up.	1. At least 14 trainees (representing 14 of New Mexico's 32 counties) selected on the basis of project eligibility criteria as outlined in recruitment brochure. 2. At least 80% of the trainees rate training program at 80% (level four on a five-point Likert Scale) over all elements of each training session. (80/80 criterion) 3. At least 80% of campus-based trainees score 80% or better on all objective-referenced tests in seven broad areas of training. (80/80 criterion) 4. Project staff will observe improvement in trainees' skill levels as they interact with preschool handicapped children in a laboratory situation. (80% will reach criterion on 80% of areas on practicum observation instrument)

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Table 1 (cont.)

Program Design, AY: 1980-1981

Inputs	Process	Outputs
		5. At least 80% of trainees contract to do follow-up special study in at least one of the seven broad competency areas. 6. At least 80% of preschool students achieve objectives in at least two areas as identified on laboratory IEP's. 7. At least 80% of the trainees will provide inservice training to their home programs and/or service to their own or contiguous counties. These activities will be based upon the summer inservice training program.[2] 8. At least 80% of the trainees will directly apply the MSU competencies in their own programs.

[2]Outputs 7 and 8 were added based on feedback from the external evaluator prior to summer 1980 training.

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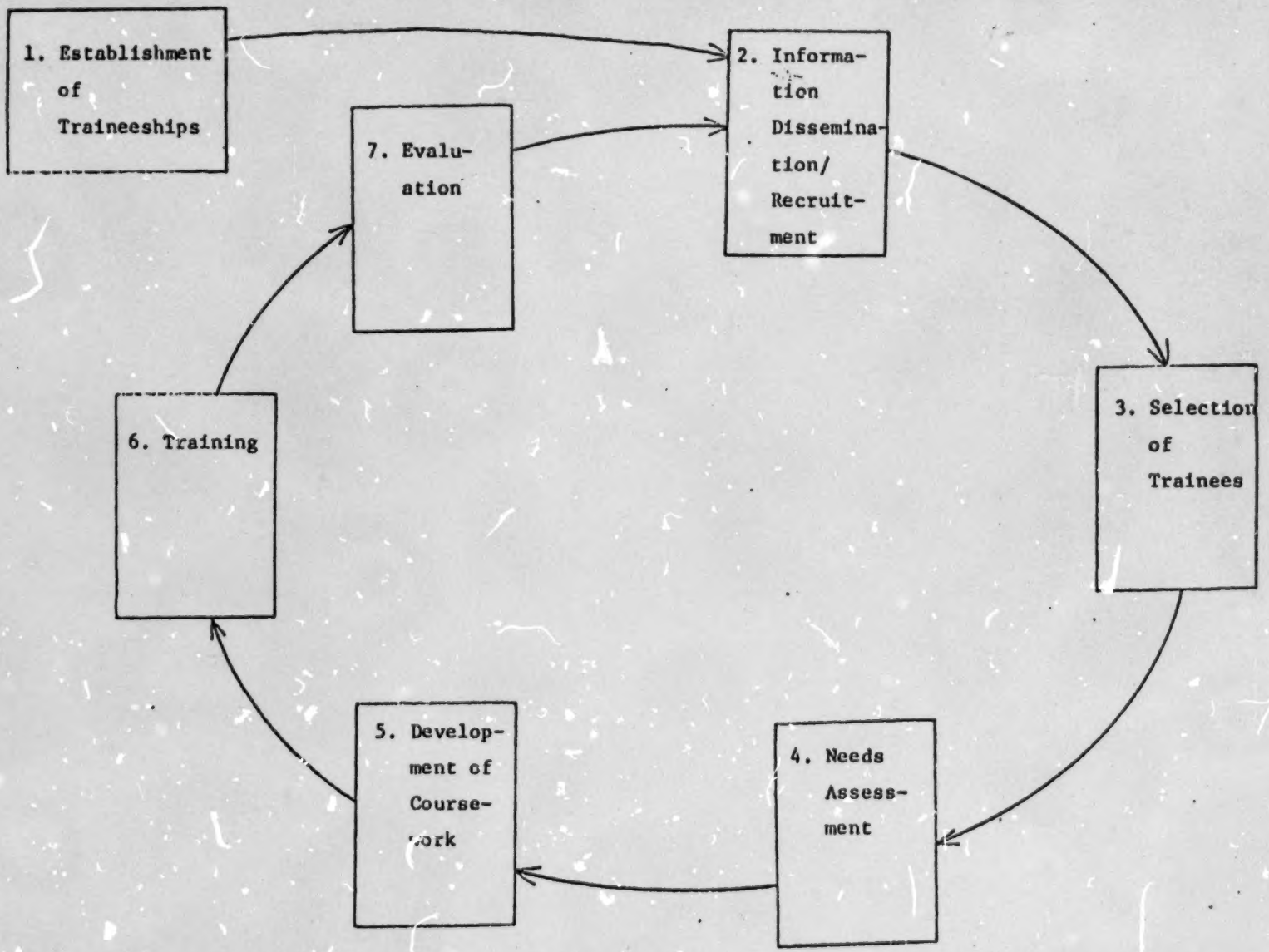

Figure 1. Major steps in the university-based inservice training model

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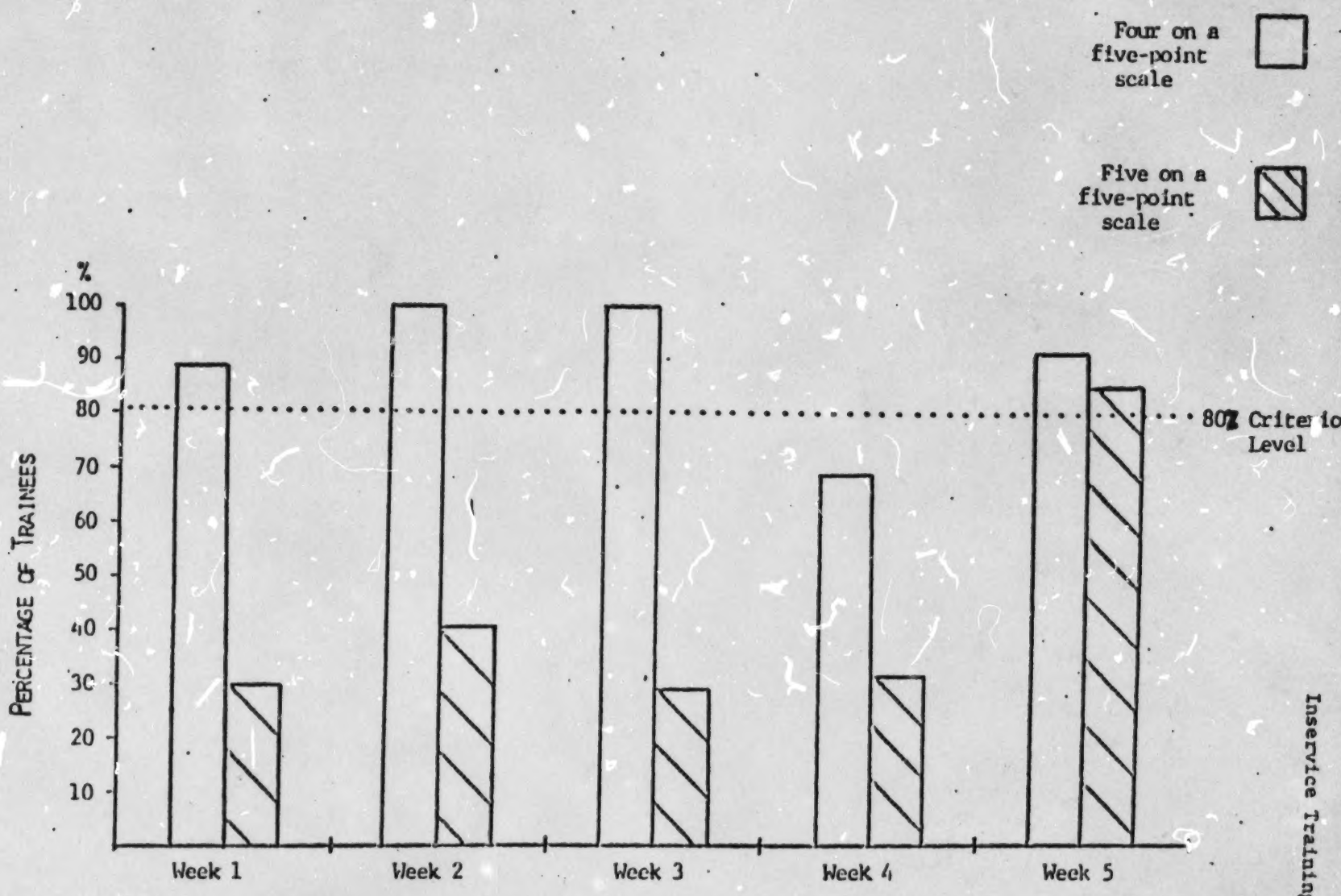

FIGURE 2. RATINGS BY TRAINEES OF WEEKLY UNITS OF WORK

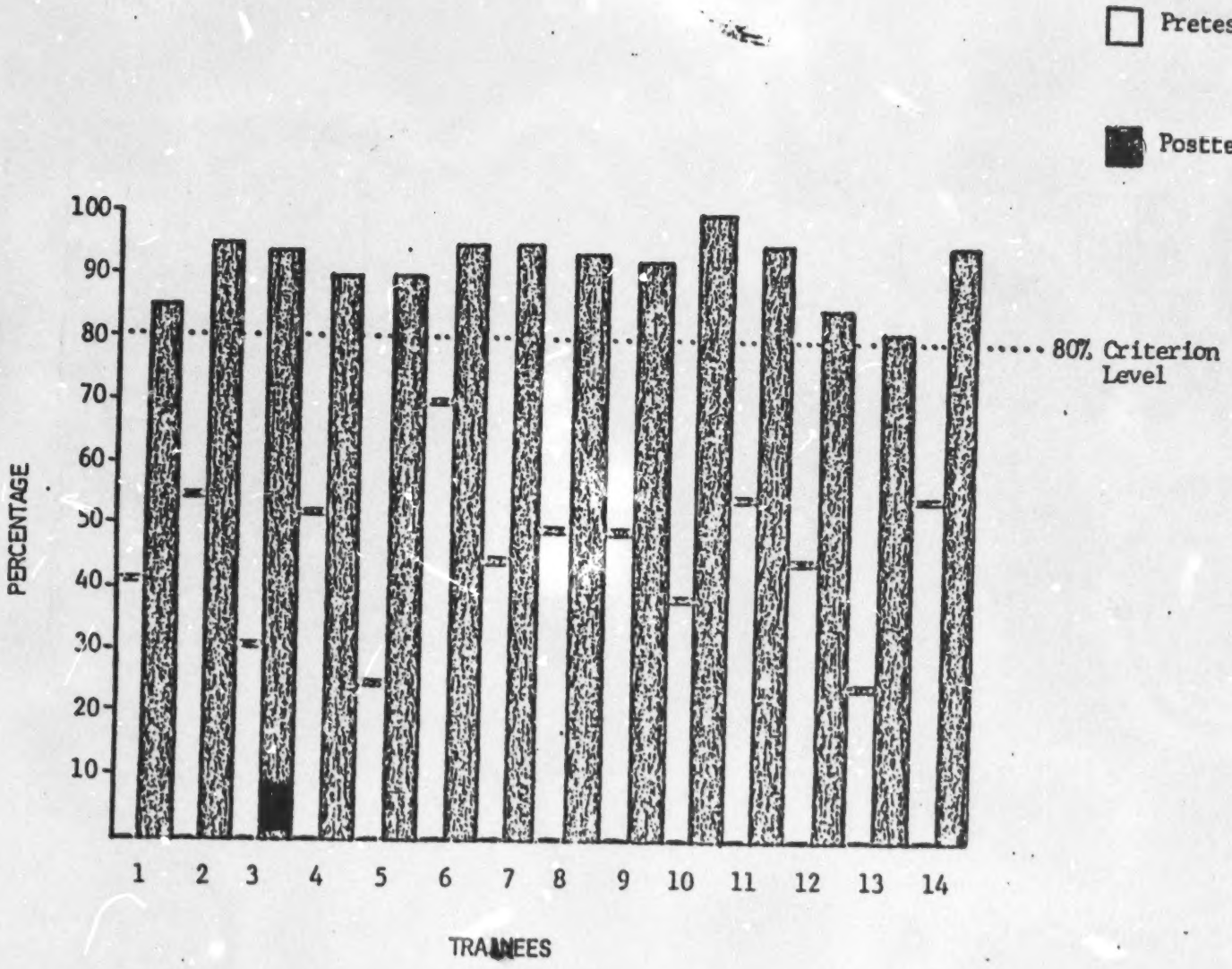

FIGURE 3. PERCENTAGE OF ACCURATE RESPONSES BY TRAINEES ON OBJECTIVE-REFERENCED PRE AND POSTTESTS

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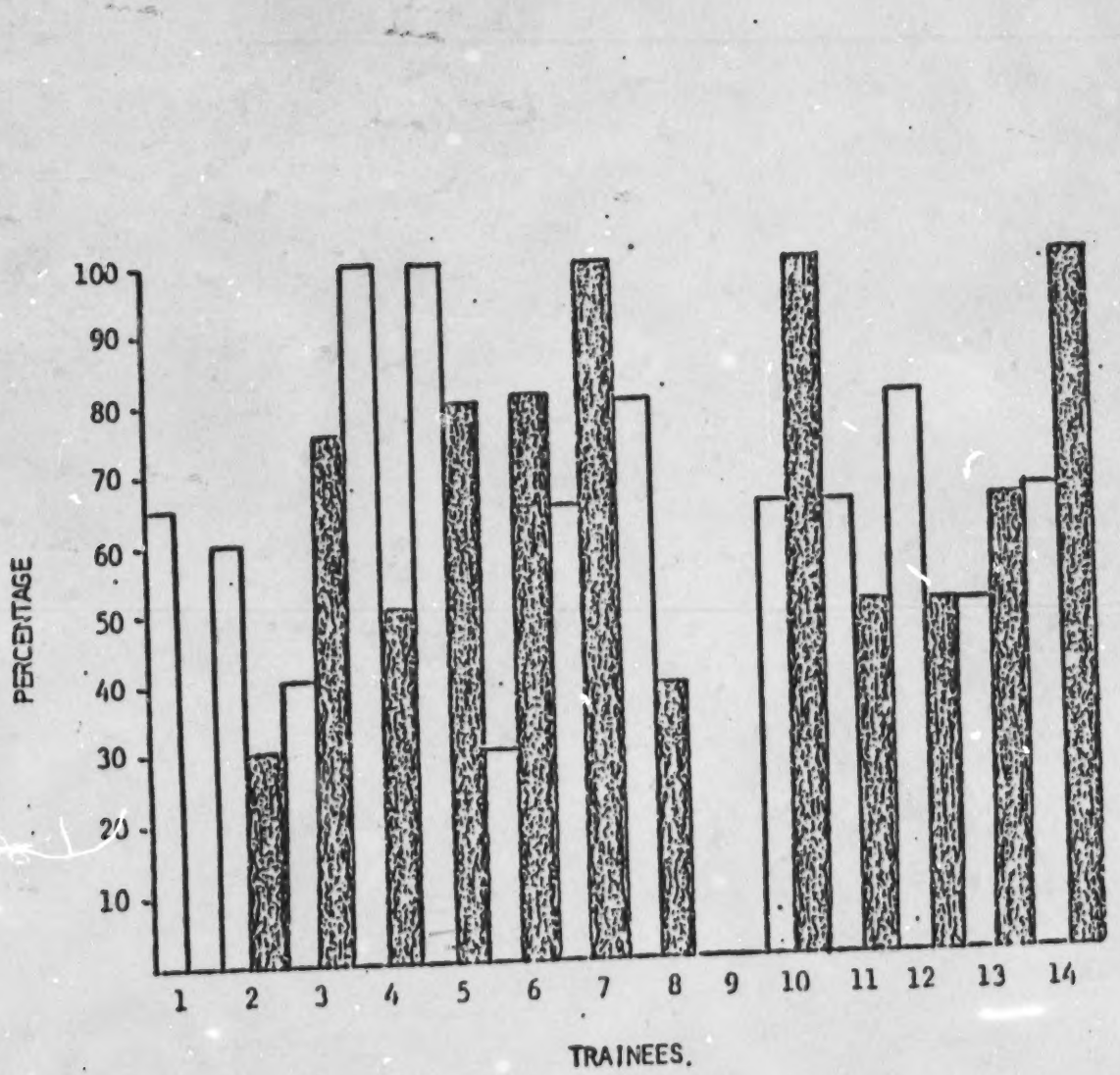

FIGURE 4. PERCENTAGE OF OBJECTIVES ACCOMPLISHED

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APPENDICES

A. Map of 32 New Mexico Counties (p. 21)

B. Photograph from New Mexico newspaper (p. 22)

C. Excerpt from Student Competency Checklist (p.23)

D. Excerpt from Syllabus (p. 24)

E. Practicum Observation Form (p. 25)

F. Mini-Conference Schedule (p. 26 and 27)

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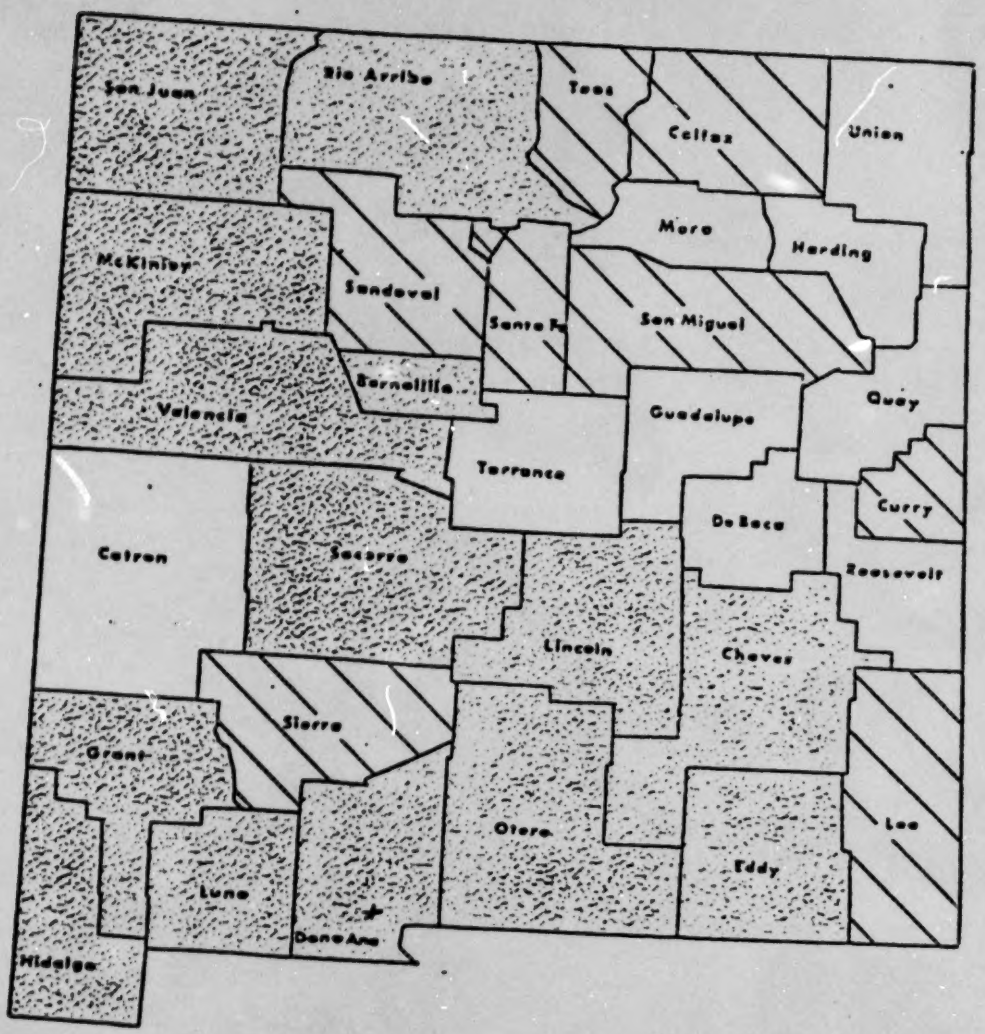

Counties with trainers (summer, 1980 trainees)

Counties without trainers

Summer, 1981 Trainees

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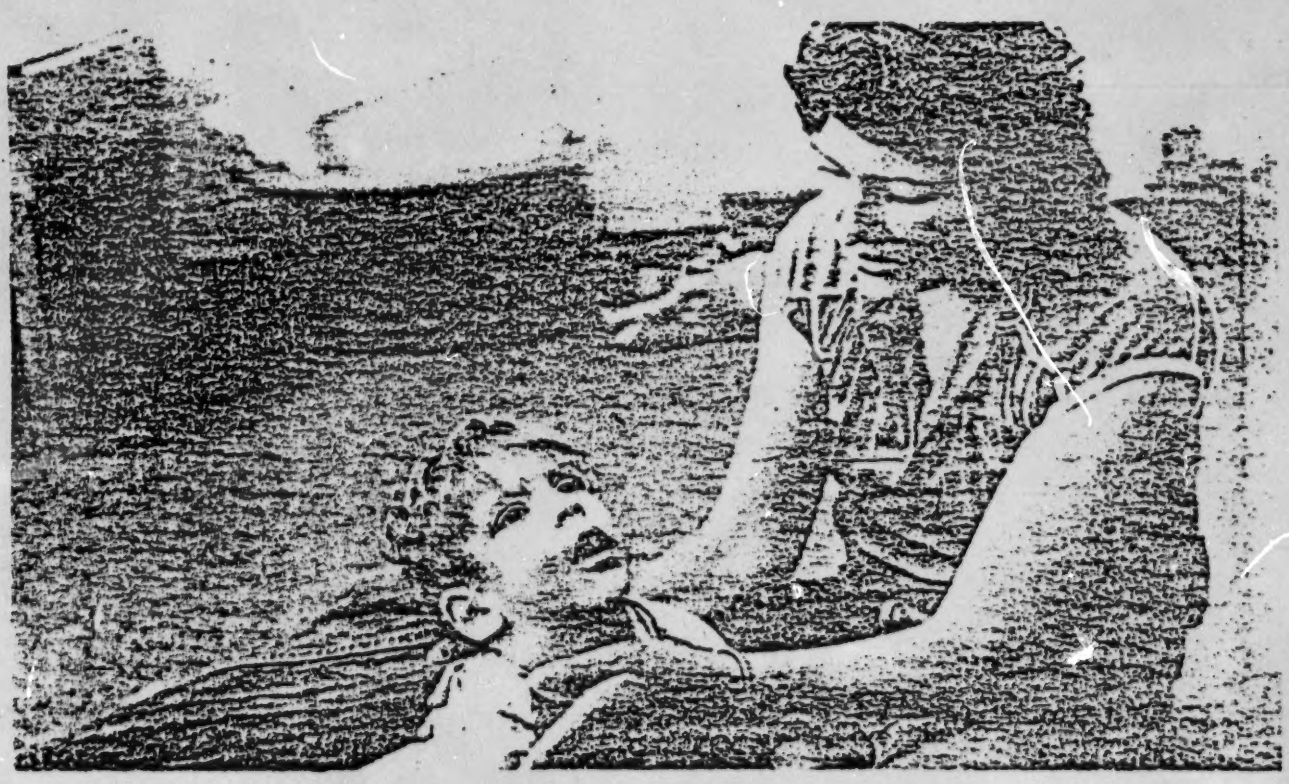
Inservice Training Program
22

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL SPECIALTIES
Box 3AC/Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003
Telephone (505) 646-2402, 646-2412



PARTICIPATE—Preschool age children from the Las Cruces area are participants in a New Mexico State University training program this summer for teachers who work with young handicapped children. Three-year-old Dennis Huson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Huson, 1230 La Fonda, works on "gross motor skills" in head and neck exercises with trainee Betty Higgins of Lordsburg. Fourteen New Mexico educators are involved in the competency based training program funded through the Division of Personnel Preparation, Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, U.S. Office of Education. NMSU personnel under project director Steve Stile, are cooperating with personnel from Las Cruces Public Schools and Open Door Center, which is a regional replication site for the University of Illinois' Precise Early Education for Children with Handicaps (PEECH) and the University of Wyoming's Infant Stimulation Program.

(Anne Hutchins Photo)

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COMPETENCY LIST FOR TEACHERS OF PRESCHOOL-AGED HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

COMPETENCY(IES)	WHERE/HOW ACQUIRED	YES/NO	DATE	EVALUATION MODE (for Preschool Project Preservice Sequence/Inservice Training)
1.11 For a specific preschool handicapped child, the candidate will establish an initial assessment procedure, carry out the assessment, and formulate a statement of current level of performance.	SP&A 706D SP&A 708D PSYCH 642D Other_____	____ ____ ____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____	1.11 Observation of administration; written/oral report(s) evaluated by instructor
1.12 Given a skill sequence in a particular area, the candidate will develop an informal assessment instrument which will pinpoint a preschool handicapped child's skill level and which could be used by other teachers.	SP&A 706D SP&A 708D EDFD 706M Other_____	____ ____ ____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____	1.12 Assessment instrument evaluated by instructor
1.13 Given a diagnostic report on a preschool handicapped child which includes formal and informal assessment data, the candidate will explain possible implications for instructional programming (e.g., areas of emphasis; first skills to be taught, etc.).	SP&A 706D SP&A 708D PSYCH 642D EDEX 865D Other_____	____ ____ ____ ____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	1.13 Observation of administration; written/oral report(s) evaluated by instructor
1.14 Given the current level of performance in six specific curriculum areas, the candidate will establish yearly goals for a preschool handicapped child.	SP&A 705D (mock data) SP&A 706D SP&A 708D Other_____	____ ____ ____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____	1.14 I.E.P.s evaluated by instructor

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TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC(S)	CONTENT	GUESTS/MEDIA/TEXT
6/27	Child Abuse & Neglect	Legal & ethical responsibilities Identification Reporting	Filmstrip-sound presentation: What the Educator Sees Handouts Transparencies
6/30	Classroom Management	Direct instruction (review) Quality control in special education (e.g., DASIE) Frederick's Clipboard System Merle Karnes' point of view/ the transdisciplinary approach (review)	Handouts Transparencies
7/1	Program Management	Program Management: Theoretical and practical consideration	Dr. Tim Pettibone, Professor, Department of Management & Development
7/2	Spatial & temporal considerations	Facilities & equipment Scheduling State standards	Handouts Transparencies
7/3	Hurray! Last day	Posttest Other evaluation Announce group competencies for check off purposes	Handouts

Student _____

Date _____

Week _____

SPED 501 Practicum Observation Form

(with thanks to C. Beasley, Utah State University, 1976)

Sd → R → Sc

	Sd	R	Sc	Correction Procedure
1				
2				
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24				
25				
26				
27				
28				
29				
30				
Total				
%				

Marking Code

"+" = Appropriate or Positive

"-" = Inappropriate or Negative

"g" = Group

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

	Rating	+	-	Comments
1	Grooming/Dress			
2	Seating			
3	Organization of Materials			
4	Attention (Prior)			
5	Materials Presented without Rdg			
6	Speech (Volume, Clarity, Gram.)			
7	Pacing			
8	Maintains Student Control			
9	Program Monitoring			
10	Interaction with Students			
11	Instruction Consistent with IEP/IPD			
12				

General Comments/Suggestions

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ALL INFANT, TODDLER AND PRESCHOOL WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS IN BRAZITO ROOM

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Friday, March 26

8:00 Welcome: Dr. David Byrne, Dean, College of Education, New Mexico State University

8:15 Orientation: Dr. Steve Stile/Mr. Jerry McDowell, NMSU Preschool Handicapped Training Project

8:30 Update on Developmental Disabilities Council State Plan Efforts: Marilyn Price, Director, NMDDC

9:45 Break

10:00 Project COPE, Philadelphia, PA. Project COPE's presentation will provide an awareness of their comprehensive sequentially programmed preprimary curriculum and management system that provides for individual developmental growth and learning of basic readiness skills: Bettye Shepherd

11:30 Lunch (Participants are urged to make their own arrangements for lunch)

1:00 Community Awareness of the Need for Early Intervention with Handicapped Children: A Hands-On Public Relations Workshop: Mr. Thom Flamboe, Coordinator, Wyoming Infant Stimulation Program, The University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY.

2:30 Break

2:45 Teaching Research Infant and Child Center Classroom for Moderately and Severly Handicapped Children, Monmouth, OR. Teaching Research's presentation will provide an awareness of their individualized skills instruction program for moderately to severely handicapped children, ages 1-8: William Moore

4:45 Crackerbarrel: Meet the presentators at an informal question and answer session (details to be announced on Friday morning.

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Saturday, March 27

8:00 The Role of the Physician in the Total Management of Exceptional Preschoolers. The purpose of this presentation is to provide preschool personnel with specific strategies for working with young handicapped children and their parents (e.g., how to ask the physician meaningful questions). Dr. Stan Handmaker, M.D., Director, Developmental Disabilities Team, Albuquerque, NM.

9:30 Project PREP, Redford, MI. The purpose of Project PREP's presentation will be to provide an awareness of their early intervention activities for academically high-risk preschool children in which parents attend classes to learn to become effective change agents for their own children, and high school students learn preparenting skills while working with children: Ann Sheppard.

10:45 Break

11:00 Community Screening. The purpose of this workshop will be to provide experience through simulation activities in developing and conducting a community screening effort to identify children at-risk for handicapping conditions: Martha Carolla, Ann Stile, Isabel Tapia, Open Door WISP and PEECH Replication sites, Las Cruces, NM.

12:30 Closing remarks/Pick up tests for C.E.U.'s.

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